

# Ghana's doctors halt emergency care in allowances dispute

August 7 2015

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Doctors in Ghana have stopped providing emergency care in a strike over allowances and training, union leaders said on Friday.

Around 2,800 public sector medics began withdrawing services to out-patient departments in [public hospitals](#) last week, and announced on Friday they would no longer work on casualty wards.

"Where we are, there is nothing like going back to work for now. We have to deal with the issues. We also wouldn't want things done without a proper resolution of the matter," Justice Yankson, president of the Ghana Medical Association (GMA), told AFP.

Ghanaian leader John Mahama said earlier this week at an 80th anniversary ceremony for the Nurses and Midwives Association he would not sanction payment to public sector workers which had not already been agreed in the budget.

Benjamin Essuman, a spokesman for the Mahama's ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC), branded the GMA the "Greedy Medical Association" on his Facebook page.

He said Mahama would not "be intimidated by striking [doctors](#) to pay them money that has not been budgeted for".

The doctors are asking for better perks but have not asked for a salary increase.

Their demands include housing, clothing and fuel allowances, company cars for the most senior members, higher overtime pay, free post-graduate medical education, improved pensions and free foreign healthcare where it is not available in Ghana.

It is not clear how long the stike will last but emergency units are expected to close.

Ghanaians are entitled to free state healthcare but ministers have asked those requiring emergency treatment to go to private clinics and show their health insurance cards.

Meanwhile hospitals have been relying on [junior doctors](#), who are not involved, and retired medics to plug gaps in their staff rotas.

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Citation: Ghana's doctors halt emergency care in allowances dispute (2015, August 7) retrieved 8 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-08-ghana-doctors-halt-emergency-dispute.html>

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